

What is claimed is:

1. A method of identifying and prioritizing wireless network devices, the method comprising:
detecting a signal from one or more wireless network devices, wherein each
signal has at least one signal quality;
identifying each of the detected wireless network devices that match a selection
criteria;
associating the at least one signal quality with its respective wireless network
device for each wireless network device that matches the selection
criteria; and
prioritizing the wireless network devices that match the selection criteria based
on their associated at least one signal quality.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein detecting a signal from one or more wireless
network devices further comprises broadcasting a request from a reference
network device and detecting a response from the one or more wireless network
devices.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one signal quality includes a signal
quality selected from the group consisting of a signal strength, a signal noise
and a signal-to-noise ratio.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein identifying each of the detected wireless
network devices that match a selection criteria comprises at least one selection
criterion selected from the group consisting of device type, device name, device
features, device capabilities, device status, past device performance, available
consumables, transaction costs and device permissions.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein identifying each of the detected wireless network devices that match a selection criteria further comprises:
generating a data structure comprising supplemental information associated with the detected wireless network devices; and
searching the supplemental information to identify those detected wireless network devices that match the selection criteria.
6. The method of claim 5, wherein associating the at least one signal quality with its respective wireless network device for each wireless network device that matches the selection criteria further comprises associating each at least one signal quality with its respective wireless network device in the data structure prior to searching the supplemental information to identify those detected wireless network devices that match the selection criteria.
7. The method of claim 1, wherein prioritizing the wireless network devices that match the selection criteria based on their associated at least one signal quality further comprises prioritizing the wireless network devices using a first sort order based on a first signal quality and using a second sort order based on a second signal quality.
8. The method of claim 1, wherein prioritizing the wireless network devices that match the selection criteria based on their associated at least one signal quality further comprises prioritizing the wireless network devices that match the selection criteria based on a signal strength of the received signal such that the wireless network device associated with the highest signal strength receives the highest priority.
9. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
establishing communication with the wireless network device that matches the selection criteria and has the highest priority.

10. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
providing a list of the prioritized wireless network devices that match the
selection criteria to a user; and
establishing communication with a wireless network device selected from the
prioritized list by the user.
11. The method of claim 10, further comprising:
highlighting a portion of the list of prioritized wireless network devices based
on a signal quality of the detected signals.
12. A method of identifying and prioritizing wireless network devices, the method
comprising:
for one or more wireless network devices:
detecting a wireless network device, wherein the wireless network
device transmits a signal having a first signal quality;
querying the wireless network device to determine whether it is of a
desired type;
querying the wireless network device to determine whether it has a
desired status; and
associating the first signal quality with the wireless network device
when it is of the desired type and it has the desired status;
generating a list of wireless network devices that are of the desired type and
have the desired status; and
prioritizing the list of wireless network devices based at least on their associated
first signal quality.
13. The method of claim 12, wherein the first signal quality is indicative of a
relative distance to the transmitting device or a presumed quality of service
available from the transmitting device.
14. The method of claim 12, wherein the signal transmitted from each wireless
network device further has at least one additional signal quality.

15. The method of claim 12, further comprising:
establishing communications with the wireless network device of the prioritized
list of wireless network devices that has the highest priority.
16. The method of claim 12, further comprising:
providing the prioritized list of wireless network devices to a user; and
in response to a user selection of one of the wireless network devices of the
prioritized list of wireless network devices, establishing communications
with the selected wireless network device.
17. The method of claim 16, wherein a portion of the prioritized list of wireless
network devices is highlighted based on a second signal quality of the
transmitted signals.
18. A computer-usable medium having computer-readable instructions stored
thereon capable of causing a processor to perform a method, the method
comprising:
receiving a signal from a transmitting wireless network device, wherein the
signal has at least one signal quality;
obtaining supplemental information from the wireless network device;
associating the at least one signal quality with the wireless network device and
its supplemental information;
comparing the supplemental information with a selection criteria to determine
whether the wireless network device matches the selection criteria; and
if the wireless network device matches the selection criteria, prioritizing the
wireless network device against other wireless network devices
matching the selection criteria, wherein the prioritization is based on the
at least one signal quality.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein the at least one signal quality comprises a signal strength and wherein the method further comprises:
prioritizing the wireless network devices based on signal strength; and
establishing communications with the wireless network device having the
highest signal strength.
20. The method of claim 19, further comprising:
attenuating each received signal if at least one of the received signals is
saturated.